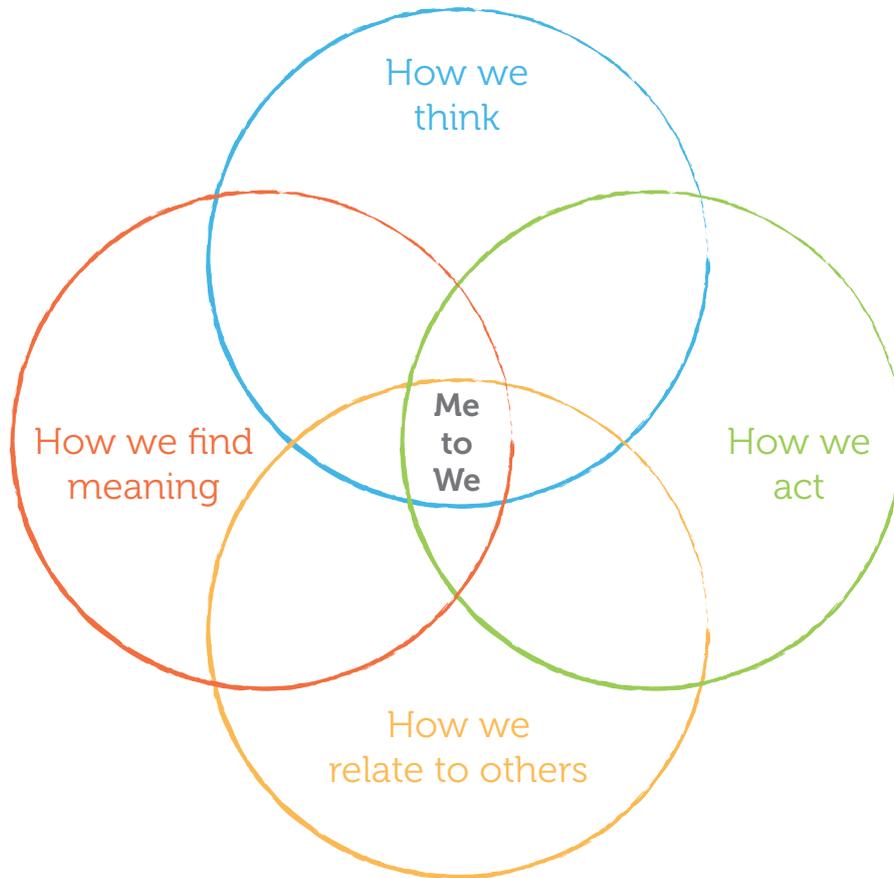


# Building Inner Strength

16 Guidelines for Life



## Level 1 Learning Log

Venue:

Date:

Facilitator:

Facilitator's email:



The Foundation for Developing  
Compassion & Wisdom

The Old Courthouse | 43 Renfrew Road | London SE11 4NA  
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## What are the FDCW and UECW?

The Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom (FDCW) is an international non-profit established in 2005. We create and disseminate education programmes and resources which enable positive long-lasting, personal and social change. We are dedicated to promoting Universal Education for Compassion and Wisdom (UECW), a secular approach to inner development that empowers people to lead a happy and meaningful life and to be of service to others.

UECW is rooted in Buddhist philosophy and psychology and deeply influenced by contemporary science and the universal wisdom of the world's philosophical, spiritual and belief traditions.

We work to bring together science and spirituality in a contemporary experiential style that's suitable for people of all ages, beliefs and cultural traditions. Our Honorary Patron is the Dalai Lama and Lama Zopa is our Honorary President.

Since the launch in Sydney in 2006, the 16G have been adopted by thousands of people in over 28 countries.

## What are the 16 Guidelines?

The 16G are a practical tool for making everyday life better. They provide a simple, robust framework for noticing our patterns of thinking, speaking and acting. Understanding how our minds work we can find lasting fulfillment. Equipped with better knowledge of ourselves we can break through our limiting beliefs, transform our relationships, make better decisions, and find peace of mind even on the most difficult of days.

Discoveries in neuroscience suggest that each of us has the potential to continue developing and transforming our minds, from birth until death. The 16G can help us to do this in a way that will benefit both ourselves and others. If you change your mind, you change your life.

The 16G were inspired by the 16 Human Dharmas, an ethical code written by King Songsten Gampo in 7th century Tibet to guide his citizens. The code played a crucial part in the transformation of Tibet from a warlike nation into a civilisation renowned for peace and serenity. So the 16G are a contemporary presentation of ancient wisdom. They are words which appear in all of the spiritual, religious and philosophical traditions of

## What are the 4 Wisdom Themes?

The Guidelines are underpinned by four philosophical themes:

**How we think** – the way we use our mind determines the way we live

**How we act** – every skilful action makes a better world

**How we relate** – to take care of others is to take care of ourselves

**How we find meaning** – if everything is changing, many things are possible

What I would like from this course:

What I can contribute to the course to make that happen:

## HOW WE THINK

### EVERYTHING WE SAY OR DO ARISES FROM OUR THOUGHTS

How we think is at the root of each word we speak and every action we do – who we choose as friends, what work we do and how we spend our time. Our lives are shaped by our thoughts from childhood until death. Do you recognise the power of your mind?

How we experience our life is dependant on how we think. So if we experience a negative medical diagnosis or our partner leaves us or dies, of course it will be frightening and destabilising but depending on how we use our mind we can experience it as a hell realm or a positive opportunity for growth.

Instinctually we experience the world as something 'out there'. Do you believe everything that you think?

Our experience of the world is dependent on what is going on 'inside' – by our state of mind. The more we pause the more we recognise that behind an emotion lies a thought. We are often not conscious of each thought arising - they happen so quickly. An outburst of anger might come from the thought 'I'm not getting what I want'. When tired or depressed, thoughts pile up: 'I'm not good enough' or 'This will never end'. Even if we recognise that the thoughts are exaggerated, our minds can create a downward spiral of dissatisfaction.

Just as an athlete trains her body, we can train our minds, and transform our habitual patterns and explore new ways of thinking. Cultivating the guidelines of this wisdom theme offers us ways to achieve this.

What I want to remember about the Enquiry into "What is the essence of the flower?"

What I want to remember about the Enquiry into "What is my essence?"

What I want to remember about How We Think....

What I want to remember about the 1st Reframing....

Who in my life exemplifies each of the guidelines in this Wisdom Theme?

Humility:

Patience:

Contentment:

Delight:

## HOW WE ACT

### EVERY SKILFUL ACTION MAKES A BETTER WORLD

Human lives are composed of billions of actions of body, speech and mind taking place every minute from birth until death. How we choose to act defines the quality of our life and experiences.

Before taking a major decision - choosing a job, where to live, or entering a relationship - most of us reflect carefully on whether it will bring happiness. When planning a holiday, we investigate if it will bring the comfort, activities or company we feel we need. First we think, and then we act. Yet, we perform countless small actions every day which do not receive focused attention.

How we choose to act is not only important for our welfare, but also for others. Through our actions we have the choice to nurture friendships, family, community and society – or to bring pain and disharmony. Every little thing we do sets in motion a chain of events. The deeper we look into this, the more we pay attention to how we think and subsequently behave, because the consequences can be so complex and far reaching.

Reason and experience show that certain actions help bring us a greater sense of well-being, while others create misery. Once this is acknowledged, we can no longer blame forces outside our control, we must acknowledge our own role in how things are, and take more responsibility for how we behave. Paying attention to the guidelines of this wisdom theme will lay a solid foundation for contributing to the happiness of ourselves and others.

What I want to remember about the Artistic Enquiry...

What I want to remember about How Act....

What I want to remember about the 2nd Reframing....

Who in my life exemplifies each of the guidelines in this Wisdom Theme?

Kindness:

Generosity:

Honesty:

Right Speech:

## HOW WE RELATE TO OTHERS

### EVERY TIME WE CHERISH OTHERS WE ARE CHERISHING OURSELVES

We can't get by totally on our own. Do you acknowledge all the people who make your existence possible? Whether it is the farmer who grew the wheat for our bread, the engineer who brought the water for our coffee, or the van driver who supplied the shop: our connections with others are endless. If we pursue this to its logical conclusion, might we find that we are linked to every being on the planet, past, present and future?

Our tendency to ignore these infinite connections is a major obstacle to happiness. We see ourselves as separate individuals who have worked hard to be 'self-sufficient' and 'independent'. Advertisements say it is okay to be self-centred, to 'look after No.1' and to prioritise our own needs and concerns. At school or at work, on the TV and social media, we are encouraged to compete rather than to collaborate. The result is often isolation, loneliness, anxiety and depression.

At the root of strong and lasting relationships is a sincere wish for the other person to be happy. By cultivating this thought we learn to act with more kindness, and others are more likely to respond positively towards us. Our happiness ultimately depends on others, they are one of the most effective routes to a happy life. The guidelines of this wisdom theme are a powerful tool to strengthen our relationships.

What I want to remember about the Enquiry into "What do I need from others to be happy?"

What I want to remember about the Enquiry into "What do others need from me to be happy?"

What I want to remember about How We Relate to Others....

What I want to remember about the 1st Reframing....

Who in my life exemplifies each of the guidelines in this Wisdom Theme?

Respect:

Gratitude:

Forgiveness:

Loyalty:

## HOW WE FIND MEANING

### IF EVERYTHING IS CHANGING, MANY THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

Change is everywhere. It is a law of nature. As the world revolves, day turns to night, seasons come and go, food grows and decays, machines are invented and become obsolete. Even mountains and continents are on the move. We are in a constant process of change. The atoms that make up our bodies are in flux. We are born, we grow, and hopefully we reach adulthood and get old and die. In every moment, our thoughts and emotions are shifting, often faster than we can realise.

Everything that is produced is subject to change and decay. Ignoring this basic truth traps us in illusion. We think and act as if things endure and remain stable, despite all the contrary evidence. We forget that a treasured cup will break, a loving relationship may falter, or that we and our family, friends and pets will die. When we fail to appreciate this, our lack of understanding can cause incredible discomfort and pain in our lives.

We know intellectually that things will change, yet we try to ignore the fact. Change can be scary. What will the future hold? Will it be better or worse, easier or harder, sad or happy? Yet a life without change is devoid of opportunity and hope. We would be stuck just as we are, without the opportunity to grow or develop. If we can make wise decisions about how to spend our time and energy, change is something to be welcomed and embraced. There is infinite potential in every moment - and it is up to us whether we choose to grasp it.

Our search for meaning will depend on our ability and willingness to explore new and unfamiliar territory. This is why it is often called a 'path'. It can be a challenge to venture deep inwards, to explore our inner strength and longings, and find out how to use them to create a happy and fulfilling life. The process may be tough, demanding and exhausting, but also thrilling, liberating and profound. Who are you? What are you doing here? How can you make the best of the rest of the years you spend on this earth?

What I want to remember about How We Find Meaning...

What I want to remember about the 2nd Reframing...

Who in my life exemplifies each of the guidelines in this Wisdom Theme?

Aspiration:

Service:

Principles:

Courage:

## SOME DEFINITIONS AND REFLECTIONS

### 01. HUMILITY - to be willing and able to learn from others

When people try to speak with you, do you sometimes continue with what you are doing, such as cooking a meal, reading a newspaper or looking at a computer screen?

Do you treat them as if they were not important enough to have your full attention?

Next time this happens, stop what you are doing. Make contact and listen carefully. Note one new thing that you have learned

### 02. PATIENCE - to cultivate a calm and spacious mind

Is there anyone who really irritates you?

Take five minutes out, in a quiet spot, to identify exactly what gets on your nerves.

Is there a quality in that person which you have a hard time accepting within yourself?

Can you use this insight to bring some space into the situation?

### 03. CONTENTMENT - to enjoy who we are and what we have

Do you often feel restless and dissatisfied?

Next time you experience this, instead of springing into action, come to a standstill. Resist the impulse to look at your phone, eat, drink, smoke, start a conversation or whatever you usually do.

Take a few deep breaths and accept things as they are.

Let it remain so for five minutes. Does this alter the choices you make?

### 04. DELIGHT - to rejoice in the good fortune of others

When did you last experience a moment of pure and utter delight?

Can you take delight in something that happens today, fully and without reservation?

Conclude each day by celebrating these moments instead of dwelling on problems and difficulties.

### 05. KINDNESS - to be friendly, caring and considerate

Would you like to be more kind to other people?

Or for them to be more kind to you?

Take some extra time today to notice just one person. What are the little things that uplift or irritate them?

What can you offer – a coffee, a conversation or just a smile?

Respond in a way that is easy for them to receive. What difference did it make to your day?

### 06. HONESTY - to act with transparency and fairness

Is there anything that is niggling you?

Is there a situation in which you have exaggerated or misrepresented yourself or your finances?

Be honest with yourself so that you can be honest with somebody else.

### 07. GENEROSITY - to give without expecting anything in return

Could you be giving more to others than you do at the moment?

In what area would that be – your time, your skills or your resources?

Are you willing to engage beyond your normal comfort zone?

### 08. RIGHT SPEECH - to speak with insight and sensitivity

When is the last time you said something that made you cringe?

For the space of one hour, can you take care over every word that you say?

Can you speak only words that contribute to the welfare of the person you are talking to?

Listen deeply to discover what those words need to be.

**10. FORGIVENESS - to let go of resentment and anger towards ourselves and others**

Which person has the most power to make you irritated and upset?

How much time do you spend thinking about them?

Do you get upset when this person fails to meet your own expectations or needs?

Are your expectations realistic?

What do you need in order to begin to forgive?

Can you create some space in your mind in which forgiveness can take root?

**11. GRATITUDE - to acknowledge and repay the kindness of others**

What is going well in your life?

Can you identify six people who have contributed to this situation, either directly or in- directly? Have you expressed your appreciation?

Some of them may be hard to thank. Is there a skilful way to do it?

**12. LOYALTY - to be good-hearted and dependable in all our relationships**

Are you close to someone who is having a difficult time at the moment?

Take a few quiet moments to consider their situation and their needs.

Is there something practical you can do to support them?

Are you willing to do it? If not, what is holding you back?

**13. ASPIRATION - to seek a fulfilling way of life that avoids causing harm**

Do you dream of how to make the world a better place?

What would you like to see happen that is big and inspiring?

Are you willing to start it now? What would be the first small step?

**14. PRINCIPLES - to develop sincere and stable inner values, and avoid harmful influences**

What are the issues that you are passionate about?

Why do they fire you up?

What do they tell you about yourself?

How do you identify your own personal guidelines on how to think and behave?

Do you manage to live up to them? If not, what can you do about it?

**15. SERVICE - to help and benefit others in whatever way we can**

Are you feeling burnt out, with nothing left to give?

Do you offer service to others at the expense of your own wellbeing?

Are you willing to do something in the next week to show compassion to yourself?

Try to bring the same softness and compassion into the next thing you do for someone else.

**16. COURAGE - to accept responsibilities and challenges with calm determination**

Have you the courage to change the things that need changing?

Is there something worthwhile that you long to accomplish?

What is it that holds you back?

How substantial is that fear?

Even if you're afraid, are you willing to do it anyway?

**Learning Strategies**

**We Encounter**

Look, Listen, Read

**We Examine**

Reflect, check-up

**We Experience**

Integrate, Embody

**16 Guidelines Tools**

Tool 1: Mindfulness

Tool 2: Heart and Mind Reflection

Tool 3: Enquiry

Tool 4: Reframing and Pre-framing

Tool 5: Role Models

Tool 6: The Cards and App

Tool 7: The Book

## 16 GUIDELINES PERSONAL PRIORITY MATRIX

Time for some metacognition: how do you rate yourself on each of the guidelines?

|              | Not sure | Okay | Priority to work on |
|--------------|----------|------|---------------------|
| Humility     |          |      |                     |
| Patience     |          |      |                     |
| Contentment  |          |      |                     |
| Delight      |          |      |                     |
| Kindness     |          |      |                     |
| Honesty      |          |      |                     |
| Generosity   |          |      |                     |
| Right Speech |          |      |                     |
| Respect      |          |      |                     |
| Forgiveness  |          |      |                     |
| Gratitude    |          |      |                     |
| Loyalty      |          |      |                     |
| Aspiration   |          |      |                     |
| Principles   |          |      |                     |
| Service      |          |      |                     |
| Courage      |          |      |                     |

## SOME SCIENCE NOTES FOR THE 4 WISDOM THEMES

### How We Think

#### What is Neuroplasticity?

It is the brain's tendency to change in response to positive or negative experiences, by growing new connections, or creating new neurons (neurogenesis). Research has disproved the assumption that the brain is 'hardwired' after the formative years of childhood. The evidence is that throughout life and into old age, connections are strengthened between neurons that are repeatedly activated in response to what we pay attention to.

According to neuroplasticity, thinking, learning, and doing change both the brain's physical structure (anatomy) and functional organization (physiology). The facts are that:

1. What fires together wires together.
2. What is not used, deteriorates - use it or lose it.
3. You are re-shaping your brain every second.

#### Does Mindfulness Matter?

'There is growing evidence that techniques which encourage the mindful awareness of one's sensations, thoughts, and feelings, increase the frequency of positive emotions and can have beneficial effects on well-being.' **Felicity Huppert**, Well-Being Institute.

In scientific research 'mindfulness' is usually defined as 'bare attention', which involves maintaining non-judgmental and non-reactive attention on immediate experience, allowing recognition of mental events as they arise in the present moment. Research by **Mark Williams** at Oxford University, has shown that bare attention practice is an effective antidote to depression, anxiety and distress.

In **Indian contemplative traditions** the meaning of 'mindfulness' smṛti (in Sanskrit) or sati (in Pali) is the mental activity that 'remembers' the object of attention without forgetting it.

Mindfulness is one part of a set of interdependent mental activities that: 1) keep the focal object in mind (mindfulness), 2) fix the mind on the object (concentration), and 3) check the mind's hold and quality of attention while monitoring for distractions (introspection).

So mindfulness can be cultivated as a distinct mental activity that underlies several practices, including focused attention, basic mindfulness and not just 'bare attention'.

Mindfulness needs to be cultivated on the basis of leading an ethical life, and should include compassion and wisdom. Otherwise mindfulness may be used for destructive purposes (e.g. a 'mindful burglar'), rather than for positive transformation.

### Research on Mindfulness

Research by **John Medina et al** has shown that a stressed brain doesn't function well. By using mindfulness methods we can cultivate a relaxed, stable and clear mind. In this way we are able to develop focus and are able to place our attention – an important skill in our perception of reality.

**Dr Richard Davidson**, a leading neuroplasticity researcher at Wisconsin University, studied US veterans before, during and after a 7-day meditation course. After 7 days most veterans had:

- reduced their post-traumatic stress disorder level by 40%
- reduced sleep problems significantly, one by 72%.

A month afterwards improvements were still visible. Davidson's studies indicate that:

- attention can be developed and becomes effortless with practice;
- long-term practice results in increased thickness of the prefrontal cortex and decreased activation of the amygdala, which indicates greater capacity for emotion regulation.

The implications of studies by Davidson and others are that attention training effects lasting and positive changes in brain activation that contribute to a more positive and realistic self-image and personal efficacy, which is associated with greater physical and mental health, well-being and resilience. These enable:

- greater self-regulation of emotions
- increased ability for directed attention
- higher cognitive functions
- greater emphatic concern and pro-social behaviour.

**Herbert Benson** at Massachusetts Hospital, Boston has shown that meditation boosts genes that promote good health. After 8 weeks of daily meditation the volunteers' gene profile analysis showed that clusters of important beneficial genes had become more active and harmful ones less so.

**Meditator's brain** - a variety of scientific experiments have shown:

- the growth of areas of the brain co-related with happiness [left prefrontal cortex] in meditators and the diminishing of areas correlated with aggression/anger. e.g. research on Matthew Ricard, dubbed the 'happiest man in the world'.
- better modulation of the fear response which then increases courage
- increased activity in circuits correlated with maternal love (caudate) and empathy (right insula).

**PATIENCE:** Research has shown that patience is good for our health because it helps keep our blood pressure down. Impatient people are more likely to develop hypertension.

### How We Act

**Mirror neurons**, the biological basis for empathy and compassion. **Vilayanus Ramachandran** discovered that mirror neurons in our frontal lobe can fire without the action of person. A sub-set will fire when a second person observes the action. The neuron adopts the other person's point of view. We 'do' the action with them. It applies in many ways to our actions-imitating and emulating. See also the research of: **Giacomo Rizzolatti**, **Vittorio Gallese** and **Marco Lacoboni**.

**KINDNESS:** When we reach out to others in kindness, our brain releases endorphins—the morphine-like chemicals that produce the feelings of exhilaration known as the "runner's high". **Paul Pearsall**, researcher, found that acts of kindness, also cause the brain to release "Substance P," a neurotransmitter chemical that blocks pain.

**Michael Tomasello et al**, at the Max Planck Institute, found that infants and chimpanzees spontaneously engage in helpful behaviour and will even overcome obstacles to do so.

### HONESTY:

**Anita E. Kelly** at Notre Dame University 'found that participants could purposefully and dramatically reduce the everyday lies they told, and that was associated with significantly improved health. A study at the University of Florida found that people stretch the truth when it comes to helping friends make favourable impressions. In

another study they found that people prefer friends who describe them in a favourable light, even if it means lying.

**GENEROSITY:** A brain-imaging study by neuroscientist Jordan Grafman, National Institute of Health, showed that the areas of the brain correlated with pleasure are equally active when we observe someone giving money to charity as when we receive money ourselves.

### How We Relate to Others

**Strong emotions and self-control:** Strong emotions suspend or bypass judgment e.g. when angry only 10% of our response is logical/analytic.

Neuroscientist **Matt Lieberman** explored several kinds of self-control: emotional, motor, perspective-taking, cognitive, and financial. All these are correlated with the same part of the brain, the right ventrolateral prefrontal cortex (RVLPFC), which he calls the “brain’s braking system.” Because of the RVLPFC commonality, when we engage in one kind of self-control, that braking system may cause other kinds of self-control to kick in. Lieberman says naming your feelings can regulate your emotions by tapping into this area of the brain with speech.

**GRATITUDE:** A study by **McCullough and Emmons** indicates that daily gratitude practices resulted in higher levels of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, optimism, energy, and less depression and stress.

### How We Find Meaning

**The double-slit experiment:** This famous experiment started quantum theory. It posits that the role of a conscious observer is theoretically inseparable from the reality he/she observes.

**SERVICE:** A study of volunteering in Ontario, Canada found that volunteering improves self esteem and helps to reduce social isolation, lower blood pressure, and enhance the immune system.

**Meaning:** **Steve Cole**, University of California, and **Barbara L. Fredrickson**, University of North Carolina found in a study that people who are happy because they live a life of purpose or meaning had low levels of the cellular inflammation associated with many diseases, including cancer.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO AFTER LEVEL 1?

- Sign up on [www.compassionandwisdom.org](http://www.compassionandwisdom.org) for **newsletters and updates**.
- **Read 16 Guidelines: The Basics:** take up the challenges; try the reflections; add your own quotes and thoughts in the notes section at the back. Put the 16G into practice in your life.
- **Adopt the Personal Priority Matrix** on page 7: focus on the Guidelines that you currently need the most; research everything about those Guidelines. Or Keep a 16G journal: What have you observed or learned? What has helped? What do you want to explore more?
- **Use the 16G cards or App:** pick one at random each morning as your theme for the day. Observe how that guideline impacts on you through the day. Can I exemplify it? Do I observe it around me? What is my relationship with this guideline? What can I do today to grow in this area? At difficult or decision points during the day ask, “How does that guideline inform this moment?” All guidelines can be a state of mind and a concrete action. Each card is both complex and simple, so can be used in all moods.
- **Download the children’s version of the 16G called Ready Set Happy.** Share it.
- **Introduce the 16G at work:** use the cards as a means of exploring common concerns with colleagues, or for creating a different start to a team meeting.
- **Follow the 16G training pathway** to become an accredited 16 Guidelines facilitator.
- **Host a Building on the Basics – BoB programme** which is the follow up to Level 1. It takes 10 weeks to complete and is available free from FDCW.
- **Spend an afternoon or an evening with other 16 G practitioners** and see whether you can set up a joint project, e.g. to take the 16G into a school, a prison or a hospice. Let us know if you want information on similar project in other parts of the world.

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### Web sites

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|-----------------|---------------------|
| Dalai Lama      | Beyond Religion     |
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### Web sites

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## MINDFULNESS

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Documentary "What the bleep do we know"  
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From the video archive of Search Inside Yourself: Philippe Goldin The neuroscience of emotions and Richard Davidson  
Transform your mind, change your brain: neuroplasticity and personal transformation

# 16G TRAINING PATHWAY

The Journey to Becoming an Accredited 16G Level 1 Facilitator

Your journey starts here

## Participate in a 16G Level 1 course

(12 hours delivery time)

### Learning outcomes:

- Exploring the 16 Guidelines for Life and the Four Wisdom Themes
- Becoming familiar with practical tools to support change in daily life

Possible start immediately after Level 1 course

## Engage in Building on the Basics (BoB) course

(20 hours of self study and group work over 10 weeks)

### Learning outcomes:

- Deepening and broadening your understanding of the 16 Guidelines for Life and the Four Wisdom themes
- Developing a project to put 16G learning into practical effect in your area

Ideally between three and six months after completion of Level 1

## Participate in a 16G Level 2 course

(12 hours delivery time)

### Learning outcomes:

- Exploring the 16 Guidelines for Life from different perspectives
- Understanding and working with the shadow side of the Guidelines

At least six months after completion of Level 2 to allow time for consolidation and application in daily life

## Participate in a 16G Level 3 course

(18 hours delivery time)

### Learning outcomes:

- Developing skills to effectively articulate the Guidelines and the Wisdom Themes
- Developing skills and confidence in facilitation following the principles and ethos of Universal Education

**Co-facilitate a Level 1 with a Senior Facilitator** who will recommend accreditation and/or give mentoring advice for further development

**Congratulations!**

Welcome to the FDCW Faculty as a new 16G Level 1 Facilitator



The Foundation for Developing  
Compassion & Wisdom